



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

*Keith / Kevin M
JTB*

OCT 16 1997

OFFICE OF
WATER

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Request for Technical and Policy Assistance for Perchlorate Contamination of Water in Region 9

FROM: Robert Perciasepe
Assistant Administrator *Robert Perciasepe*

TO: Felicia Marcus
Regional Administrator, Region 9

Thank you very much for your memorandum of September 23, 1997. I particularly appreciate your efforts to summarize the current "state of the science" as well as to highlight several of the other key considerations associated with perchlorate contamination of water.

We concur with the general areas of concern and necessary actions as summarized in your memorandum:

- the need to identify potential areas of perchlorate contamination nationwide,
- strengthening the capability of EPA laboratories to detect perchlorate,
- improving the toxicological information on perchlorate and expediting its evaluation, and
- addressing technological solutions to perchlorate contamination in water.

I believe that a coordinated effort needs to be mounted both within and outside of EPA in response to this threat.

As a first step in response to your memorandum, my staff participated in a conference call on October 3, 1997, with representatives of the Office of Research and Development; the Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response; and Region 9. It was agreed that summaries of current and planned activities, research, and studies would be forwarded to the Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water (OGWDW). OGWDW will then compile and summarize this information in order to develop, for the benefit of all interested offices, a more comprehensive picture of ongoing activities.

Pursuant to your request, I will send a letter to the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration requesting information on facilities that manufactured and used perchlorate.

We believe it would be appropriate to build upon the existing Agency perchlorate issues group to form an interagency perchlorate study group comprised of all concerned EPA offices, regions, and representatives of other agencies. The study group can be tasked with identifying gaps in existing information and developing a strategic plan to gather the necessary information that will enable the various offices and regions to take appropriate actions.

As you noted in your memo, we have specifically highlighted for public comment the issue of perchlorate as a potential priority contaminant of concern in our October Federal Register notice on the draft drinking water Contaminant Candidate List. The list is required under the Safe Drinking Water Act, as amended, and will help establish the Agency's regulatory, data collection and research agenda for drinking water over the next several years. We have invited comment on whether perchlorate should be included on the final list (to be published in February 1998) as well as asked for occurrence and health effect information about this contaminant.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff on this important issue. In the interim, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Jeanette Wiltse at (202) 260-5389.

cc: Fred Hansen
Timothy Fields, OSWER
Henry Longest, ORD